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SUBJECT: ELECTION RESULTS AT LAST OFFICIAL

REF: QUITO 475

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The official proclamation of election results on July 1 will allow President Correa's inauguration for his second term to take place on August 10, as he wanted. Due to the number of challenges and appeals, the public waited 66 days to learn the official outcome. Correa's movement, which won 59 of 124 seats in the National Assembly, has gained three allies so far, and is seeking the support of additional Assembly members elected under other party banners. End Summary.

CORREA GETS HIS WAY

¶2. (U) Sixty-six days after the April 26 general elections, official results for the 15 National Assembly members elected on a national basis were finally proclaimed on July 1. The official results for all elections held on April 26 and June 14 have now been announced. This sets the timetable for these officials to begin their terms given that the constitution's transition provisions required the National Assembly to be sworn in 30 days after the proclamation of all election results, and the president ten days later.

¶3. (SBU) Both the National Electoral Council and the Elections Disputes Tribunal rushed their administrative procedures so that Correa could be inaugurated on August 10, which coincides with the 200th anniversary of Ecuador's so-called "Call for Independence," a date of great symbolic significance. National Electoral Council president Omar Simon told us that each provincial electoral council had already proclaimed the results for the National Assembly members representing provinces, so this announcement concludes the process. Hence, there was no official announcement of the aggregate National Assembly seats won by each party.

PAIS BUILDING MAJORITY

¶4. (SBU) Press figures for the National Assembly breakdown show that PAIS won 59 out of the 124 seats, followed by 19 for the Patriotic Society Party, 11 for the Social Christian Party, seven for the Institutional Renewal and National Action Party, and the rest distributed among other parties with less than five seats each. While PAIS's tally of 59 is just short of a majority, Coordinating Minister of Politics Ricardo Patino claimed that the government would control 80 votes in the future Assembly through alliances with smaller groups. The radical Popular Democratic Movement (MPD) was originally expected to ally with PAIS, but MPD has since become estranged by the government's insistence on teacher evaluations that the MPD-associated teachers' union opposed. Legislative Commission President Fernando Cordero suggested a few weeks ago that the new Municipal Movement might ally with PAIS, but its leader, former Quito mayor Paco Mancayo,

rejected that idea. PAIS claims that it has secured the support of one defector from PSP, one Socialist Party/Broad Front member, and one member elected as the sole representative of a small political movement. According to the 2008 constitution, the National Assembly will be in place until May 2013.

15. (SBU) The 5,959 government officials elected by popular vote on April 26 and June 14 are now all decided. In addition to the president/vice president and the 124 National Assembly members, this includes prefects and vice prefects, mayors, local city and parish council members, and Andean Parliament representatives. The process of determining the election results appeals was particularly contentious in the case of Manta, Manabi province, where the Electoral Disputes Tribunal changed the originally announced election outcome, determining after a recount that a different mayoral candidate had won.

#### COMMENT

16. (SBU) The pressure exerted by the Correa administration on the electoral authorities was evident in the rush with which results were proclaimed in order to meet the date he had chosen to be inaugurated. It is not clear whether political actors will be satisfied with the treatment received in the rushed appeals process. However, nobody denies that President Correa will begin a new term with newfound power now that he has supporters holding local government positions.

HODGES